

extinct species—extinct, that is, within its limits—and respecting these species it would seem as if no scrap of intelligence has been overlooked, and every clue that offered followed, until the account may be called exhaustive. The value of the information thus given is manifest now, and will year by year increase as an historic record. Yet alongside of the extermination or rarification of many species may be set the consoling fact that there are others which have a happier fate, and, as Mr. Southwell is able to declare, occur and actually breed more numerous in Norfolk than heretofore—a result that in the case of the Gadwall, the Shoveler, the Pochard, and the Tufted Duck he does not hesitate to ascribe to recent legislation in establishing a close time during which the lives of these and many more should be safe. But of the vanished or vanishing species the number must be far larger. The Pelican and the Crane ceased as inhabitants before the time of contemporary records, but the existence of the Cormorant is testified by documentary evidence. The Bustard, as all know, has been banished from this county, its last stronghold in England, and the story of its banishment is told by Mr. Stevenson as it was never told before; while Mr. Southwell adds an hardly less interesting appendix to it in recounting an attempt, unique in the annals of British ornithology, but unfortunately frustrated by the weather and thus unsuccessful, to induce a fine male that appeared in 1876 to prolong his stay and take to himself a wife, provided by Lord Lilford's thoughtfulness. The Avoset and the Godwit are also gone, and the Ruff survives, it is believed, but in one locality; while those delights of the seaside, the Terns, have only a few remaining haunts, about which Mr. Southwell is discreetly vague, since no birds are more exposed to persecution or have everywhere more rapidly decreased in numbers around our coasts, so as to be threatened with extinction.

Space fails us to enter as we should wish on many other merits of this meritorious work. Seldom can it have been that the place of an author dying with an incomplete book on hand has been so satisfactorily supplied; and greatly indebted as all British ornithologists are known to be to Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Southwell's labours demand, and if we are not much mistaken will receive, no small portion of their gratitude. Let us add that this concluding volume is not only illustrated, but really embellished, by three unpublished plates by Mr. Wolf—a rare thing to see in these days—and one of them, representing the home of the Black-headed Gull on Scoulton Mere, is a picture which must charm anyone with an eye to the beauties of nature.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Stray Notes on the Nomenclature &c. of some British Starfishes.

By F. JEFFREY BELL.

In making a critical revision of the names to be applied to our British Starfishes I have made some slight observations which may be worth publishing.

Ann. & Mag. N. Hist. Ser. 6. Vol. vii.

16

1. *On the Date of Dr. Gray's "Synopsis of the Genera and Species of Starfishes."*

There is considerable difference as to whether the date of publication of this paper was 1840 or 1841; nearly half the writers on the subject, and among them one of the most careful—Dr. Norman—write 1841; as a matter of fact both parts of the paper were published in this Journal in 1840, the first half in November, the second in December.

2. *Hippasterias phrygiana.*

The name *equestris* must not be applied to this species; Linnæus in both the tenth (p. 662) and twelfth (p. 1100) editions of the Syst. Nat. quotes figures from Linck which are representations of at least two species; it is necessary therefore to decide by the other figures, namely that from Barrelier ('*Icones Plantarum*,' 1714, fig. 1285), which is first quoted, and that from Seba (*Thes.* iii. pl. viii. figs. 6 and 8); both these are illustrations of an *Astropecten*. Moreover Linnæus gives as habitat the Mediterranean, whence the *Astropecten* might well come, but the *Goniaster* not.

3. *The Use of the Generic Name Palmipes.*

Nothing perhaps illustrates better the inconvenience caused by those who refuse to acknowledge the very reasonable convention that the names of our genera and species are to be based on Linnæus's '*Systema Naturæ*,' and that pre-Linnean names are not to be used, than the name *Palmipes*.

In 1834 Nardo distinctly indicated ('*Isis*,' col. 716) what he meant by *Anseropoda*, and Agassiz in 1835 (*Mém. Soc. Neuchâtel*, i. p. 192) wrote "*Palmipes*, Link (*Palmastérie*, De Bl.; *Anseropoda*, Nardo)." Agassiz quotes "*P. membranaceus*, Link," but gives no reference; Mr. Sladen, however (*Chall. Rep.*, Ast. p. 393), writes "*Palmipes membranaceus*, Linck, 1733, *De Stellis marinis*, p. 29, pl. i. no. 2;" but no such words occur in the copy of Linck which I have now before me; in fact the pre-Linneans have to write in their "specific" names from such sentences as "*Stella Cartilaginea*, Aldrovandi, p. 743, *malo dicere membranaceam*," and so on; while the description of the figure runs—"Stella quinquefida *Palmipes* seu *Cartilaginea*, Ald." Will Mr. Sladen tell us what part of the last sentence contains the specific and which the generic name?

In his defence of the use of Linckian names Mr. Sladen speaks of those who "still adhere to the letter rather than the spirit of this canon of name-priority;" but in his ardour he has forgotten that he has no mandate from Linck to ascribe to him words that he never used or collocations which he never made.

And as to the question of priority, surely it is, save only as regards fixity of nomenclature, what Darwin called a trumpety affair; but if priority is to be pressed by the pre-Linneans, why do they neglect our great countryman Llyud, and why do they not follow Müller

and Troschel in using the term *Asteriscus*, which in 1703 was definitely proposed for what we must henceforward know as *Anseropoda placenta*?

4. *Porania pulvillus*.

Mr. Sladen (*t. c.* p. 360) writes

“*Porania pulvillus* (O. F. Müller), Normau,”

by which I presume he intends to signify—though various other suggestions have been made to me by skilled zoologists—that Norman first put the *A. pulvillus* of O. F. Müller into the genus *Porania*. That is what I imagine this collocation of terms represents; but I suppose I am wrong, for, as everybody knows, Gray did it in 1848.

5. *Date of Cœlasterias*.

Mr. Sladen (*s. v.*) writes “Verrill, *Trans. Conn. Acad. Arts & Sci.* 1871 (1867),” the meaning of which is unintelligible to me. In 1867 one hundred and fifty separate copies of Prof. Verrill’s paper were, he states, issued; the separate copy in the library of the Zoological Department (presented by the author to Dr. Gray) bears date 1867; but as it includes a note respecting the fire, which destroyed the publications of the academy and necessitated their being reprinted, dated 1869, it is clear that it was not issued till two years after the date it bears. The matter is only of importance on the ground of accuracy.

6. *Lophaster furcifer*.

Mr. Sladen gives *Chætaster borealis*, 1844 (it should be 1845), in his synonymy, and does not explain why he prefers a name of later date (1846). I presume his reason is the same as mine; the earlier name is a *nomen nudum*.

7. *Marginaster*.

Mr. Sladen (*Chall. Rep.* p. 364) refers to the ‘Bulletin’ of the *Mus. Comp. Zool.* vol. ix. p. 16; this is quite unnecessary, as Prof. Perrier does not even pretend to there describe the generic characters of his new form; the description given three years later (*Nouv. Arch.* vi. 1884, p. 229) is short enough.

8. *On the Presence of Rare Forms on the East Coast*.

Dr. Norman stated in his well-known paper (‘*Annals*,’ xv. 1865) that *Anseropoda placenta* descends the east coast as far as the Moray Firth; Mr. Sim has sent it to the British Museum from Aberdeen. Similarly *Porania pulvillus*, stated by Dr. Norman to be “wholly absent on the east,” has been sent us from Ross-shire by Dr. Sutherland. I should be glad to hear of other localities on our eastern shores whence collectors have obtained these two forms, or, indeed, of other species of Echinoderms rare to the North Sea.